

CUBAN BOATLIFT FROM MARIEL, CUBA
TO KEY WEST, FLORIDA

Chronology from April 21, 1980 to June 30, 1980
with an after summary up to Sept. 28, 1980

CHRONOLOGY OF CUBAN BOATLIFT

(April 21, 1980 - June 30, 1980)

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April 21, 1980, Monday

Two boats with more than 40 Cuban nationals arrive in Key West from Mariel, Cuba.

From: Miami Herald, April 22, 1980

On April 12, Napoleon Vilabao met with high-ranking Cuban officials in Havana. At the time, he said he was told the Castro regime had no objection to allowing the refugees to leave the island.

THE BEGINNING

The two Key West fishing vessels that brought them (refugees) formed the first of two private rescue missions launched by Cuban exiles over the weekend. The larger flotilla of about 50 Cuban exile boats left Miami Saturday.

Domingo Galvan, 44 year old nurse, Key West's DePoo Hospital (crewmen of one of boats) said Cuban officials told them they could return on another day for the rest of their relatives.

Havana Radio broadcast Monday an editorial from Granma, the official government newspaper saying: "Of course we will not receive them (the flotilla) with cannon fire because they are coming in peace. We don't mind that they take (the refugees) away."

In Washington, State Department officials warned that any person trying to bring refugees to the U.S. in a private attempt to help the Cubans would be committing a felony.

Myles Frechette, head of the Cuban section at the U.S. State Department in Washington said no such rescue had been authorized. "This kind of effort only complicates things," Frechette said. "And bringing in illegal aliens is punishable by law."

April 22, 1980, Tuesday

More Cuban nationals arrive via boat.

April 23, 1980, Wednesday

From: Miami Herald, April 23, 1980

State Department officials warned Tuesday that bringing Cuban refugees directly into the U. S. is a felony, punishable by six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

But a formal statement on the issue was withdrawn. Asked why, one official said, "Policy...no, politics." He said the administration did not want to antagonize Cuban-Americans.

TIP FOR TRIP: ALERT CUSTOMS, Art. in Herald

South Florida boaters planning to pick up relatives and friends in Cuba would be wise to plan ahead and let U.S. Customs know what they're doing, Coast Guard officials said Tuesday.

Although the Coast Guard is not directly involved in the sea bridge it will help boats in distress.

Coast Guard officials at the Miami Operations Center, after receiving more than 200 calls for information about what to do, issued these recommendations:

- Guard against overloading because of the dangers of rough seas.
- Take enough life preservers for everyone on the return trip.

- Have a radio on board in case you need to call for help.
- File a float plan with family or friends giving a description of the boat, its route and the type and the type and emergency equipment you are taking.

All crews going to foreign ports, particularly in Communist countries, should contact Customs to make a routine outbound declaration said Coast Guard's Tom Powell. With it federal authorities can keep track of who has put to sea and when they are expected back.

From: Miami News, April 23, 1980

All day yesterday and throughout the night, Spanish-language radio stations broadcast news that Cuba had okayed the pickup of relatives by boats at Mariel. They gave tips from the Coast Guard on how to weather the 90 mile crossing from Key West to Cuba.

Customs officials made no effort to stop them from leaving. A federal official in Miami who asked not to be named said there is "very little chance" the Cuban boat people would be deported.

April 24, 1980, Thursday

NEW CUBAN GOVERNMENT
RESTRICTIONS

ENFORCEMENT OF U.S.
LAWS CONFUSED

From: Miami Herald, April 24, 1980

...Cuban Government announced new restrictions on whom it would permit to leave Cuba. It said that for each relative an exile Cuban boatman wants to bring to the U.S. he must bring four refugees from among those who took asylum at Peru's embassy in Havana.

A (State) department spokesman warned boat owners that they face fines of \$2,000 and jail terms of five years for each refugee brought in.

Immigration officials disagreed and said any penalty would be lighter.

As Immigration and State Department officials argued over punishments, the boatmen kept sailing racing across the straits to snatch up as many of their fellow countrymen as they could.

The United States, a spokesman (State Dept) said will accept the entering refugees without punishment. But each refugee who enters will be counted against the quota of 3,500 Peruvian Embassy refugees that the U.S. has promised to accept.

Another State Department spokesman said the Department wasn't sure what it would do if the number of refugees exceeded 3,500.

"Prosecuting these cases is going to be tough," an administration official said. For three days, the U.S. had allowed boats to make the trip without arrests or threats of prosecution.

Though puzzled by the State Department's refugee ban, Coast Guard officials made it clear that they will not board any vessel on the high seas and will not make arrests. They said they will leave it to immigration officials to enforce "whatever the law is."

The Coast Guard warned mariners in both English and Spanish radio broadcasts on shipping frequencies that importation of aliens was punishable by imprisonment and seizure of the vessel. But few of the hundreds of skippers heading to Cuba paid any attention.

REFUGEES AT A PRICE

Some boat owners were charging \$1,000 to \$3,000 a head to bring out the refugees, earning expressions of anger and disgust from Cuban exiles who overheard negotiations.

From: Miami News, April 24, 1980

MORE THAN 1,000 ARRIVED

Some 1,100 Cuban refugees poured onto American soil by midnight, and at least another 1,000 were expected to arrive today.

Neither the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Coast Guard, nor Customs personnel planned to arrest anybody despite demands by the State Department that private boat owners quit the impromptu armada, now more than 400 vessels strong.

Napolean Vilaboa, publisher of a Latin newspaper in Miami, told The Miami News the Cuban government has issued an open invitation to all exiles to come to the port of Mariel outside Havana and bring out their relatives and refugees from the Peruvian Embassy. There is no Cuba-set time limit to the number of people who can come.

Message from CGD7 to Group Miami, Group Key West and Group St. Petersburg. Apr. 24.

COAST GUARD GUIDANCE

Vessels returning from Cuba with aliens aboard should be advised to proceed to designated facilities for examination by INS and USCS. Designated facilities are Navy Mole, Truman Annex Dock in Key West and USCS dock, Miami River in Miami. Vessels name, ETA and number of refugees should be obtained and passed to designated facilities need not be boarded. No arrest of POBs or seizure of vessels while in U.S. waters and enroute designated facilities contemplated. Vessels and POBs in U.S. waters not evidencing an intent to proceed to designated facilities are to be detained and local INS and USCS and CGD7 notified. Vessels so inquiring may be advised that the Coast Guard will not arrest or seize while vessel enroute designated facilities. If in the course of normal ops, evidence comes to light of violation of safety and documentation laws, reports should be made IAW current procedures. Reply to telephone inquiries from press and persons contemplating voyage should continue to be that bringing aliens to U.S. is in violation of U.S. law.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

April 26, 1980, Saturday

From: Miami Herald, Apr. 26, 1980.
Account of activity in Mariel relayed
to the Herald by ship-to-shore radio on
Friday

REPORT FROM MARIEL

...There must be 1,500 boats out here...
A couple hotels apparently being opened
up in Havana for some of us...Some people
don't want to wait...We hope to get out
today, but the latest word is that boats
arriving Friday face a five-day wait...
One charter boat here rented for \$500 a day...

April 27, 1980, Sunday

High winds (in excess) of 60 knots pass
through Key West area. Key West Station
received 22 major SAR cases in first 10
minutes of high winds. Numerous capsized
vessels and people in the water. No loss of
life associated with all known SAR cases.

April 28, 1980, Monday

FIRST CASUALTIES

Two Orlando, Florida men found in their
capsized 22-foot cabin cruiser 20 miles
south of Miami. Men deceased. Confirmed
that they were going to Mariel.

Fifty-nine vessels assisted by Coast Guard.

April 29, 1980, Tuesday

From: Miami Herald, Apr. 29, 1980.
Account of activity in Mariel on Monday.
Passed by ship-to-shore radio.

ACTIVITY IN MARIEL

No boats left today, but we heard from
several boat crews that three or four boats
attempted to leave, and that one shrimp
boat captain who tried to leave emptyhanded
was turned back at gunpoint. Giving the
Cuban government the benefit of the doubt,
they could have been holding the book
because of the weather...Today all day it
looked like another storm...the first one
was vicious and it smashed boats together
all over the harbor. Some people were
injured. The storm Sunday literally tore
the place apart. There were several broken
legs among the people, a man torn up by a
propeller and today, they took someone away
with a heart attack...Two nights ago, they
sent out Beulah, a 25-foot boat with a
maximum capacity of six to ten persons. They
put 30 persons on the boat and they were told
they could either take all of them or none.

CUSTOMS SEIZES THREE
BOATS (THE FIRST)

On Monday, April 28, three shrimp boats were seized pending payment by their skippers of \$507,000 (\$1,000 for each alien aboard). U.S. Customs officials said the boats were seized for "flagrant violations." Seized were the Captain J.H. operated by Walter Noyes; the Melanie operated by Jerome M. Montague; and the Mary Evelyn operated by Charles Warner.

From: Miami News, April 29, 1980

Jim Dingfelder, U.S. Customs said the decision to begin seizing boats was made when officials realized attempts to discourage departures with verbal warnings, and later with notices of potential fines of \$1,000 per person brought here were having little or no effect.

CGD7 News Release, April 29, 1980

The Commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District, Benedict L. Stabile, has initiated a communique to the Cuban Border Guard in an effort to ensure safety of life at sea. The telex message sent at noon today requests that the U.S. Coast Guard be provided with the names of all vessels departing Mariel, Cuba, the number of people on board and the time of departure. The proposed cooperation is hoped to ensure an orderly procession of vessels from Cuba to Florida as well as providing valuable information to other Federal agencies processing arriving aliens. Rear Admiral Stabile emphasized the continued need for safety precautions by all boaters and the Coast Guard's intention to cite boat operators for violations such as overloading and lack of safety equipment. Coast Guard vessels stationed between Florida and Cuba, along with aircraft overflights, will continue to monitor vessel movements and provide necessary assistance.

From: CGD7 Sitrep 11

1,013 refugees arrived in Key West. Two bodies sighted floating in the water by Coast Guard C-131. Bodies not recovered nor identified. Vessels assisted to date: 219. Total refugees arrived exceed 5,000.

COAST GUARD SENDS
MESSAGE TO CUBA

TWO MORE BODIES

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

COAST GUARD FORCES INCREASED

Since the boatlift began last week the Coast Guard has brought in more than 600 people to assist the 200 Coast Guard personnel normally assigned to the Florida Keys. A total of 12 cutters ranging in length from 82 to 378 feet and eight aircraft are in the Florida Straits.

April 30, 1980, Wednesday

From: Miami Herald, April 30, 1980
Account of activity in Mariel Harbor.

BOATS LEAVING MARIEL WITHOUT REFUGEES

Things are getting a little crazy...Cuban control sent letters to every boat in the harbor. Processing the 2,000 to 2,500 boats here could take up to a month, they said. Meanwhile, the boats are running out of food, and a lot are leaving without refugees...This (Tuesday) morning a half-dozen boats left without refugees.

May 1, 1980, Thursday

From: CGD7 Sitrep 13

Forty-nine vessels arrived in Key West, 25 of the vessels arrived without refugees. A total of 916 refugees came into Key West. Total: 6,461 as of midnight May 1.

Cutters talking with departing vessels from Mariel indicate approximately 2,000 vessels in Mariel with 15,000 to 20,000 people from U.S. Conditions are terrible. Cuban government charging exorbitant prices for food, water, fuel and other sundries. Boat operator informed there is a 30-day delay in processing people who wish to leave and boats departing wishing to take relatives must accept criminals as passengers. Many of the vessels in the harbor are short on money, some have been extended credit by Cuban government and are not allowed to leave until payment has been wired. The result is many vessels are leaving emptyhanded.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

May 2, 1980, Friday

NAVY SHIPS TO WORK WITH
COAST GUARD

CGD7 News Release

Coast Guard search and rescue planners are realigning patrol areas in the Straits of Florida to include two U.S. Navy vessels which will augment Coast Guard forces in the Cuban boatlift. The 830-foot amphibious assault ship USS Saipan, with an 850-man crew and accomodation for 2,000 persons, departed Norfolk, Va. this morning along with the 522-foot tank landing ship, USS Boulder. The Boulder has a complement of 250 officers and men with room for an additional 300 persons. Both vessels are expected to arrive off Key West late Sunday and will operate under the tactical command of Rear Admiral Benedict L. Stabile, commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District. The USS Saipan, with 17 helicopters and a 22-man medical team aboard, and the USS Boulder will provide search and rescue response in addition to 11 Coast Guard cutters and eight aircraft.

From: CGD7, Sitrep 14

On May 2, 1980, 1,901 refugees arrived. Total to date arrived: 8,362. Vessels aided: 311.

May 4, 1980. Sunday

RECORD NUMBER OF ARRIVALS
INTO KEY WEST

MORE DEATHS

From: CGD7, Sitrep 16

A total of 3,784 refugees arrived in Key West. Total to date: 12,867. At 5:30 am the P/C Lucy I reported seeing a small green boat sink rapidly some 50 miles southeast of Key West. The Lucy I which was diaabled at the time did not see the two people on board get free of the craft. They are presumed drowned.

May 5, 1980, Monday

From: Miami Herald, May 5, 1980

The U.S. government slammed the door Sunday on legal immigration from Cuba.

From: CGD7, Sitrep 17

Refugees arriving into Key West: 2,894.
Total to date: 15,761

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

May 6, 1980, Tuesday

DR. DANIELS ARRIVES
OVERLOADED

CGD7 News Release

The Coast Guard is considering charging the operator of the 150-tugboat Dr. Daniels with criminal negligence after the vessel arrived in Key West today with more than 600 refugees. The passage of the Grand Cayman registered tug from Mariel, Cuba to Key West has been monitored by the Coast Guard since information was received of its apparent grossly unsafe operation. Coast Guard regulations and international convention require inspection and documentation to carry passengers, as well as firefighting and lifesaving equipment, including lifevests for each passenger aboard. The tug does not appear to meet these requirements as it was not constructed to carry passengers.

Rear Admiral Benedict L. Stabile, commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District, stated that "while the Coast Guard recognizes many vessels involved in the Cuban Boatlift are not properly equipped from a boating safety standpoint, the sheer numbers of vessels prohibits citing every violation. However, the manifestly unsafe operation of vessels such as the Dr. Daniels, with an alarming potential for casualty of disastrous proportions and large loss of life, dictate that operators be cited and prosecuted to the extent the law will allow."

New Policy by U.S. Gov't

New U.S. policy places no limit on the number of Cuban refugees who may enter the U.S. President Carter states "...We'll continue to provide an open heart and open arms to refugees seeking freedom from Communist domination..."

President declares a state of emergency in those parts of Florida "severely affected" by the wave of incoming Cubans.

PRESIDENT'S OPEN ARMS POLICY

May 10, 1980, Saturday

BOATS OVERLOADED

From: CGD7, Sitrep 22

Refugees arriving into Key West: 1,057.
Total: 31,228. Cutter Dauntless removed 265 people from five overloaded vessels.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

May 11, 1980, Sunday

FATALITY #7

Passenger aboard a 23-foot boat ran into a tow line between two other vessels and died.

May 12, 1980, Monday

From: Miami Herald, May 12, 1980

VESSEL AMERICA

Not a single relative of the Cuban-Americans who chartered the America was on board the 100-foot red-white-and-blue catamaran, which carried about 700 refugees.... "They told us we are in Cuba now, under Cuba regulations. And that we'd take what they gave us or they'd take the boat," said Tom O'Toole, captain of the America.

The America was so overloaded that the Coast Guard had to take 200 of the refugees off of it in the middle of the Straits. Carey Cole (officially in charge) was furious about the passengers he'd been forced to bring to Key West. He told Cuban authorities his boat safely could hold only 300 people. He said, "I said I didn't come down here to pick up these people. They said if I didn't take them they would seize my boat, name it Fidel, and put me before a firing squad.

The return of the America...was a heartbreak for the 80 Cuban-Americans from Miami, New Jersey and Puerto Rico who paid \$1,000 apiece plus \$500 for each relative they hoped to bring back from Cuba.

May 13, 1980, Tuesday

From: Miami News, May 13, 1980

COAST GUARD DETAINS VESSELS
FOR MARINE SAFETY VIOLATIONS

The shrimper Lady Mona, which arrived with 220 refugees aboard and the Gulf Princess II with 130 were detained by Coast Guard officials for possible violation of marine safety laws. The two shrimpers joined a small fleet of seven other boats detained by Coast Guardsmen Sunday.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

CUSTOMS PROMISES MORE SEIZURES

A Customs spokesman said more boats will be seized if officials believe they can prove the captains knowingly violated Federal laws against transporting undocumented aliens. "You're going to see more seizures in the next few days," said Customs spokesman Jim Dingfelder. "We're finally getting our act together and learning how to coordinate with the other agencies involved."

From: CGD7 Sitrep 25

Cutter Diligence escorted a convoy of 23 refuge vessels towards Key West with an estimated 1,500 refugees aboard. Coast Guard broadcasts for the State Department that non-essential travel to Cuba be postponed.

May 14, 1980, Wednesday

IN MARIEL

From: Miami News, May 14, 1980

Cuban officials forced the flotilla to wait in the harbor, the arriving captains said, saying the weather in the Florida Straits was bad. "They told us there were 25-foot seas out there," said Robert Yeatts, a crewman aboard the shrimper Red Cloud, which brought in 265 refugees, "but we had a marine radio getting Key West weather reports for the Florida Straits and saying there were 3-5 foot seas."

After a 36-hours wait, the Dulce II and two other small boats finally forced their way out of Mariel, said Captain John Houck, "They told us to leave and when we started to leave they said all the small boats had to go back, and a patrol boat turned its machine gun on us while we were waiting at the mouth of the harbor," Houck said. "I wouldn't go back because I didn't have enough food for these people, so we joined up with two other little boats and just went on through. We knew they wouldn't shoot us."

"We had a bunch of jailbirds," said Ed Titus of the Cayman. "I could tell because lots of them had jail tattoos. We took the civilized people and put them in the cabin and let the hooligans run around on deck." Titus said the captain of the Cayman agreed to take 230 people selected by the Cubans instead of the relatives the boat went for because the 20 people who chartered the boat were eager to leave Mariel."

From: CGD7 Sitrep 26

THREE MORE DEATHS

PRESIDENT ORDERS FLOTILLA HALTED

Three fatalities of refugees from convulsion and respiratory problems. Coast Guard issued urgent marine broadcast in English and Spanish: "All U.S. citizens in Cuban ports and enroute to Cuba are advised to return to the U.S. at this time. The U.S. government will arrange alternative transportation for Cuban citizens desiring to emigrate through an organized sealift that will ensure safe and orderly transportation... Vessels not under charter or hire by the U.S. government are subject to heavy fines and possible seizure if they transport Cuban citizens in violation of U.S. Immigration Laws. All U.S. boats in Mariel and those enroute to Cuba are advised to return to the U.S. without delay."

May 15, 1980, Thursday

From: Miami Herald, May 15, 1980

How Carter Hopes to Stop Flotilla--
-the U.S. will take punitive steps against boat captains who bring refugees to the U.S., including heavy fines, confiscation of boats and, possibly, criminal prosecution.
-by radio, the Coast Guard told crews of Cuba-bound boats to turn back and those waiting at Mariel to return without refugees.
-to replace the flotilla, the U.S. would sponsor an airlift or sealift to continue the refugee exodus--if the Castro government permits.

"We will do everything possible to stop these illegal trips to Cuba," the President declared as the refugee count topped 42,000.

From: Miami Herald, May 15, 1980

Jack Watson, the President's domestic policy advisor, indicated that the Coast Guard would begin stern enforcement of laws permitting seizures of vessels."

LAWS WILL BE CARRIED OUT

"We have not been enforcing the full force of the law. We are going to do so," Watson said. Only 24 boats had been impounded at Key West, for such violations as overloading and unlicensed carrying of passengers for hire.

According to presidential assistant Jack Waston, every vessel carrying new refugees to the U.S. will be stopped as soon as it lands, with notices of \$1,000 fines handed out by INS officers. In addition the Coast Guard will board each boat at sea to look for violations of safety law.

Captains and owners of the 24 boats already impounded have protested angrily, claiming informal permission to bend the rules and complaining that Cuban authorities forced them to accept overloads of passengers who were strangers to those who hired the boats.

CGD7 News Release, May 15, 1980

COAST GUARD REINFORCEMENTS

More than 400 additional active duty and reserve personnel from the Eastern United States are being called to south Florida to assist in the Cuban boatlift. In support of the President's directive, six Coast Guard cutters, nine aircraft, six utility boats and 14 boating safety detachments, plus support personnel, will reinforce existing Coast Guard and U.S. Navy units to ensure the transition to a safe, legal and orderly flow of Cuban refugees to the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety personnel have identified vessels certified that they meet safety standards to be contracted by FEMA for a government boatlif. In addition to fulfilling the primary mission of safety of life at sea to the estimated 1,500 boats now in Mariel Harbor, Coast Guard units will check

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

May 16, 1980, Friday

REPORTS OF BOATS BEING
FORCED TO LEAVE WITH
REFUGEES

compliance with Boating Safety and Commercial Vessel Safety Laws, as well as Immigration and Customs Laws.

From: Miami Herald, May 16, 1980

Cuba-bound traffic from Key West virtually ended Thursday in response to a presidential order, but Mariel harbor in Cuba continued spitting out refugees by the hundreds...

"We and the others, we don't understand. What are we supposed to do?" one boat captain among 1,200 or so at Mariel crackled over static on a ship-to-shore broadcast. "We can't leave without people."

A late-night radio transmission from a captain at Mariel backed up numerous reports that others were compelled to load refugees. He said he was close to the harbor exit, patrolled by a 100-foot Cuban guard boat. "I saw two shrimp boats try to go out without people on them, and they turned them around.... They are really loading these boats down--these 40-foot lobster boats, they put over 100 people on them. A 20-foot speedboat had about 40 people when it came out. I just saw a 40-foot sailboat go out with about 150.... I haven't seen one go out empty."

May 17, 1980, Saturday

BOAT SINKS: 14 DIE

COAST GUARD COMMANDANT
BLASTS CUBA

The 35-foot P/C OLO YUMI capsized with 52 people on board. Ten bodies recovered with four people missing. Incident took place 28 miles north of Havana around *:30 a.m.

CGD7 News Release, May 17, 1980

The Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral John B. Hayes today decried, "The continued lack of regard for human life by Cuba," upon hearing of the tragic incident involving the pleasure craft Olo Yumi. Admiral Hayes remarks paralleled his earlier appeals to the Cuban government to adhere to its responsibilities for the safety of life at sea as spelled out in its international treaties. "Cuba is a party to the

International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea," Hayes stated. In that appeal, Hayes said "...thousands of refugees in the current "Freedom Flotilla" are encouraged to leave that country in overcrowded, unsafe vessels. This is totally inconsistent with Cuba's treaty obligations under SOLAS and other international agreements.

Admiral Hayes then added that the Cuban government's current attitude toward the refugee exodus by sea is "courting disaster" and may soon result in a marine tragedy involving hundreds of lives.

In addition, a telex message was sent to the Cuban Border Guard this afternoon by Rear Admiral Benedict L. Stabile, commander, Seventh Coast Guard District. The telex stated "This marine tragedy happened because too many persons were put on board the small boat. The Coast Guard again urges the Border Guard to prevent future disasters by not allowing boats departing Mariel to be overloaded. To permit boats to go to sea in an unsafe condition is inconsistent with our mutual concern for safety at sea."

May 19, 1980, Monday

MORE THAN 50,000 REFUGEES
ARRIVED IN UNITED STATES

Refugees arriving in the United States tops the 50,000 mark. Total of 3,843 refugees arrived Monday.

Totals to date: (Coast Guard)

vessels assisted.....	752
sinkings.....	27
capsizings.....	13
abandoned.....	32
confirmed deaths.....	24
voyages terminated.....	9
vsls detained by CG.....	33
vsls seized by Customs.....	290

May 22, 1980, Thursday

COAST GUARD STOPPING
BOATS GOING TO CUBA

P/C Cathy of California intercepted by Coast Guard 15 miles outside of Key West and operator arrested. Adolfo Padron, 50, faces charges for violation of the Dept. of Treasury's Cuban Assets Control Regulations.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

May 24, 1980, Saturday

From: Miami News, May 24, 1980

Commander Samuel Dennis said Coast Guard cutters "...have been turning back all boats trying to leave for Cuba."

A handful of ships have slipped through the Coast Guard radar blockade, but the boats' names and identification numbers were recorded for legal action upon their return.

May 26, 1980, Monday

CGD7 Sitrep 38

75,000 MARK TOPPED

Refugees arriving Key West: 3,492. Total to date: 78,327.

A fatality (yesterday) became #25 in the boatlift.

CUBAN TUG IN KEY WEST: FOUR
ASK FOR ASYLUM

Cuban tug 2nd of December towed to Key West. Vessel had been taken over by some of the people on board. Tug became disabled near Key West. Four of seven persons aboard requested political asylum.

May 28, 1980, Wednesday

From: CGD7 Sitrep 40

PROTEST OF BOAT SEIZURES

Approximately 300 persons demonstrated in Key West at the Federal Building in protest of federal vessel seizures of boats for transporting refugees.

May 30, 1980, Friday

From: Miami Herald, May 30, 1980

REFUGEES TO STAY

The 88,885 Cuban refugees who fled to the U.S. in the last six weeks will be permitted to stay, President Carter said for the first time.

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY TO HELP

From: Miami News, May 30, 1980

The U.S. Coast Guard will send out civilians in private boats from its southern district auxiliary to help with search and rescue operations in the Cuban Boatlift, spokesman Bruce Pimental said. The southern district's 5,000 civilians will go out in groups of 200 for a week or two at a time, Pimental said.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

June 3, 1980, Tuesday

VSL RED DIAMOND

100,000 REFUGEE MARK TOPPED

From: Miami News, June 3, 1980

A freighter carrying 847 Cuban refugees pushed the Mariel sealift over the 100,000 mark today, but the captain who brought them here was hustled off to jail. The red and white 118-foot Red Diamond V, which had its Panamanian registry revoked overnight, was towed into Key West shortly before 9 a.m.

June 4, 1980, Wednesday

From: Miami News, June 4, 1980

President Carter approved the callup of 900 Coast Guard reservists to replace active duty guardsmen involved in the Cuban refugee sealift. A total of 300 each two weeks for six weeks.

June 5, 1980, Thursday

PANAMANIAN SHIPS LEAVING
WITHOUT REFUGEES

From: Miami News, June 5, 1980

The 118-foot Panamanian-registered vessel Return To Paradise came back without refugees. "Castro said he's not putting any refugees on boats with Panamanian flags because he and Torrijos are friends," said freighter captain Manuel Morales.

The 276-foot Rio Indio departed for Grand Cayman from Mariel without refugees/

June 6, 1980, Friday

FREEDOM FLOTILLA OVER ?????

From: Miami Herald, June 6, 1980

Except for the stragglers, the Freedom Flotilla is over. Fewer than two dozen boats remained in Mariel Harbor by Thursday afternoon. Most were expected to return today. By early evening, 54 boats carrying 2,378 refugees arrived in Key West. Since April 21 when the first boatload arrived, 110,002 refugees have made the crossing.

From: CGD7 Sitrep 53

FIRST HEARING

The first RS 4450 hearing resulting from charges in connection with the Cuba to Key West sealift was held June 6, 1980. Glenn Sizemore, operator of F/V Hunter was charged with one charge of misconduct with three specifications: (1) carrying more than six passengers without certificate of inspection (2) operating beyond the scope of operator's license (3) engaging in international voyage carrying more than 12 passengers without SOLAS certificate.

CUBAN BOATLIFT CHRONO

June 6, 1980, Friday

The respondent pleaded that he had no choice as officials in Mariel dictated the number of people to be transported from that port. The Coast Guard, however, was able to prove intent in that the operator had on board PFD's far in excess of that required for carrying six or less passengers.

From: CGD7 Sitrep 49 Totals

Vessels assisted.....	1,226
Sinkings.....	38
Capsizings.....	15
Abandoned.....	42
Fatalities.....	25
Voyages terminated.....	12
Vessels detained by USCG.....	35

June 10, 1980, Tuesday

NAVY GOES HOME

From: CGD7 Sitrep 53

U.S. Navy ships detached from Cuban Boatlift humanitarian assistance.

June, 20, 1980, Friday

FINES ARE FOR REAL

From: Miami Herald, June 20, 1980

The 1,807 boat captains who participated in the outlaw Cuban boatlift are slowly learning that the U.S. apparently wasn't kidding. The bills sent to those fined for bringing in illegal aliens now total more than \$114 million.

ONE THIRD OF BOATS RETURNED
WITHOUT REFUGEES

William E. Zimmer, deputy regional commissioner of INS said, "Nearly 2,000 boats have been served with notices of intent to fine. And they will be fined."

By Thursday evening, a total of 1,807 boats had arrived in Key West with refugees. Only 653 boats have arrived without refugees during the entire boatlift.

COAST GUARD TO KEEP
A BARRIER PATROL IN
FLORIDA STRAITS

From: CGD7 News Release, June 19, 1980

The Coast Guard will maintain it's presence in the Straits of Florida and Florida Keys to ensure safety and to enforce U.S. law. Coast Guard cutter, aircraft and small boat patrols will continue despite the current phase down of other federal agency resources.

June 30, 1980, Monday

From: CGD7, Sitrep 73

Refugees arrived Key West.....	102
Total refugees.....	115,360
Vessels assisted to date.....	1,290
Sinkings.....	45
Capsized.....	15
Abandoned.....	42

NOTE: Reports from Mariel harbor from an unidentified "crewman" via ship-to-shore radio to the Miami Herald was in fact, Herald reporter Janet Fix.

SUMMARY OF BARRIER PATROL IN STRAITS --

Mission: to stop vessels bound for Cuba with the intention to embark undocumented aliens for transportation to the United States.

Vessels arriving in Key West from Mariel are met by a team of Customs, Immigrations and Coast Guard personnel. Vessels intercepted by the Coast Guard at sea are also turned over to this team. The team works together to determine the nature of violations of laws and regulations. Generally, Customs will seize the boat, Immigrations will take custody of the aliens, and arrest the crews if the U.S. Attorney deems there is sufficient evidence for prosecution. Coast Guard personnel check for boating safety and marine safety regulation violations. Since the boatlift began more than 1,200 (figures up to 22 Sept 80) cases involving violations have been processed by the Seventh District hearing officer to determine appropriate civil penalties. Some of the more common violations are: carrying passengers for hire without a licensed operator; carrying passengers on an uninspected vessel; and insufficient or unserviceable flotation devices.

LAWS-PENALTIES 8 USC 1323 Prohibits bringing illegal aliens into country. Penalty \$1,000 per alien.
 8 USC 1324 Criminal penalty for willfully bringing in aliens. Fines up to \$2,000 and up to five years in jail per alien.
 31 CFR 515 Cuban Assets Control Regulation prohibits certain types of transactions with Cuba. Criminal penalty of up to \$10,000 and up to 10 years in prison.

Forces in Straits: 15 USCG cutters (82-378-feet); 3 utility boats; 4 USN mine-sweepers (172-feet); 5 USN patrol craft (65-feet); 5 USCG fixed wing aircraft; 5 USCG helicopters; and 3 USN nighttime surveillance planes. Approximately 1,450 personnel (1,125 USCG, 325 USN).

Between June 6 and Sept 25, there 201 vessels bound for Cuba turned back to Key West by barrier patrol forces. This is an average of 2-3 per day. Between June 6 and Sept 25, there were 15,250 refugees arriving into Key West. An average of a thousand a week. They came to the U.S. aboard boats that evaded the blockade.

On Sept. 25, 1980, Thursday boats began leaving Mariel after being told by Cuban authorities that the boatlift was over and Mariel was closed. Over the next couple of days 99 vessels left Mariel and arrived in Key West without refugees.

FINAL STATS: Sunday, Sept 28, 1980 - Vessels assisted.....1,409 Capsized....12
 Abandoned.....45 Confirmed boatlift fatalities.....27 Total refugees: 125,262